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they didn't understand it." Neither did I, good reader; but so it was.

One rather odd feature in my case I may mention. Although I never actually succeed in any thing, I am always *very near* doing so—very near getting every thing—within an ace, in almost every instance, of obtaining all I want. My friends are frequently *bitten* by this will-o'-the-wisp in my fortunes, and have fifty times congratulated me on the strength of its deceptive promises or successes, which of course are never realized.

In reply to their congratulations on such occasions, I merely smile and shake my head; adding, perhaps, "Not so fast, my good friends; wait a bit and you'll see. I have been as *near* my mark a hundred times before."

Perhaps the reader would like to glance at a case in point. I will present it to him: it is not yet three weeks old. I applied for a certain appointment in the gift of a certain board. Here is the reply of the secretary, who was my personal friend:—"My dear Sir, I am exceedingly happy to inform you that your application, which was this day read at the board, has been most favourably received. Indeed, from what has passed on the subject, I may assure you of success, and beg to congratulate you accordingly. Your success would not perhaps have been quite so certain had Mr S— been at home, as he would probably support his friend B., who is the only person you had to fear. But Mr S—, who is on the continent (at Carlsbad), is not expected for a fortnight, and cannot be here for a week at the soonest; so you are safe."

"Well, then, *now* surely, Bob," said my friends to whom I showed this letter, "you cannot doubt of your success in this instance."

"No, indeed!" exclaimed I, with the usual shake of the head and accompanying smile of incredulity; "never had less expectation from any thing in my life. Don't you see, Mr S— *will* be home in time, and *will* give his powerful interest to my rival?"

"Impossible, my dear sir; Mr S— is at Carlsbad, and *cannot* be home in less than a week. Neither steam-boat nor railroad could enable him to accomplish such a feat."

"No, but a balloon might; and depend upon it a balloon he will take, rather than I should get the situation. This he'll certainly do, although he knows nothing of what is going on."

"There's the postman, my dear," said I with gentleness and equanimity to my wife, on the morning of the third day after the conversation above alluded to had taken place. "It is a letter from my friend Secretary Wilkins, to inform me that I have lost the situation of —; that Mr S—, performing miracles in the way of expedition, although not impelled by any particular motive, came home just in time to support his friend B., and, of course, to cut me out."

It was precisely so. "My dear Sir," began my friend's letter, "I am truly sorry to inform you"—I read no more; not another word. It was quite unnecessary; I knew it all before. So, laying the letter gently on the table, I said with my wonted smile, "Exactly; all right!"

Now, does the reader think that in this, or in any other similar case, I gave myself the smallest uneasiness about the result? Not I, indeed—not the smallest. I expected no success, and was not therefore disappointed. C.

## OLD TIMES.

BY J. U. U.

"My soul is full of other times!"

Where is that spirit of our prime,

The good old day!

Have the life and power of that honoured time

All passed away!

When old friendship breathed, and old kindness wreathed

The cot and castle in kindred claim,

And the tie was holy of service lowly,

And Neighbour was a brother's name,

And the streams of love and charity

Flowed far and wide,

And kind welcome held the portal free

To none denied,

And blessed from far rose that kindly star

The high roof o'er the well-known hall,

The cordial hearth, the genial mirth—

Has Time the tyrant stilled them all!

Ay, some are fallen—their courts are green;

The cold calm sky

Looks in on many a once-loved scene

Of days gone by.

And some stand on, but their lights are gone,

Their manners are new and their masters strange;

They know no trace of that frank old race

Swept off by the tide of time and change.

These would'st thou mourn, go, trace the path,

The far wild road,

To some old hill where ruin hath

Its lone abode—

Where morn is sleeping, and dank dews weeping—

Where the grey moss grows on the lintel stone—

Where the raven haunts, and the wild weed flaunts,

And old remembrance broods alone:

There weep—for generous hearts dwelt there,

To pity true—

Each light and shade of joy and care

These old walls knew.

With weary ray the eye of day

Looks lifeless on their mouldering mound:

Their pride is blighted!—but the sun ne'er lighted

A happier home in his bright round.

There smiles, whose light hath passed away,

Bound young hearts fast;

And hope gild many a coming day

Now long, long past.

There was beauty's flower and manhood's power—

The frail, proud things in which mortals trust;

And yon hall was loud with a merry crowd

Of breasts long mingled in the dust.

There too the poor and weary sought

Relief and rest;

His song the wandering harper brought,

A welcome guest;

There lay rose lightly, and young eyes shone brightly,

And in sunshine ever life's stream rolled on;

And no thought came higher how time could wither—

Yet time stole by, and they are gone.

And there—the breast were cold indeed

That would not feel,

How with the same relentless speed

Our seasons steal.

The princely towers and pleasant bowers

May scoff the hours with gallant show,

In vain—they are what once these were,

And in their turn must lie as low

THE BEAUTIFUL IN NATURE AND ART.—In looking at our nature, we discover among its admirable endowments the sense or perception of beauty. We see the germ of this in every human being; and there is no power which admits greater cultivation: and why should it not be cherished in all? It deserves remark, that the provision for this principle is infinite in the universe. There is but a very minute portion of the creation which we can turn into food and clothes, or gratification for the body; but the whole creation may be used to minister to the sense of beauty. Beauty is an all-pervading presence; it unfolds the numberless flowers of the spring; it waves in the branches of the trees and the green blades of grass; it haunts the depth of the earth and sea, and gleams out in the hues of the shell and the precious stone; and not only these minute objects, but the ocean, the mountains, the clouds, the heavens, the stars, the rising and setting sun, all overflow with beauty. The universe is its temple, and those men who are alive to it cannot lift their eyes without feeling themselves encompassed with it on every side. Now, this beauty is so precious, the enjoyments it gives are so refined and pure, so congenial with our tenderest and noble feelings, and so akin to worship, that it is painful to think of the multitude of men as living in the midst of it, and living almost as blind to it, as if, instead of this fair earth and glorious sky, they were tenants of a dungeon. An infinite joy is lost to the world by the want of culture of this spiritual endowment. Suppose that I were to visit a cottage, and to see its walls lined with the choicest pictures of Raphael, and every spare nook filled with statues of the most exquisite workmanship,